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Title International Journal of Primatology

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Abstract

The International Journal of Primatology is an official publication of the International Primatological Society, published by Springer. It is devoted to fundamental research on primates and aims to promote the survival of the primate populations of the world. The International Journal of Primatology publishes high quality original articles, reviews, commentaries, and book reviews. It reflects the broad theoretical foundations of our field and publishes laboratory and field studies from a broad diversity of disciplines, including anthropology, anatomy, ethology, paleontology, psychology, sociology, and zoology. It regularly publishes guest-edited special issues on particular themes.

Main Text

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Editorial History

The International Journal of Primatology was established in 1980, in response to proposals made during the 6th Congress of the International Primatological Society in 1976 for an externally-refereed journal of basic primatology linked to the Society. The Founding Editors, Gerald A Doyle and Matt Cartmill, list three aims in their Introductory Statement: to provide a high quality, carefully reviewed primatological journal, to promote the survival of primates by increasing our knowledge and understanding, and to contribute to the interdisciplinary study of human evolution (Doyle & Cartmill 1980).

Beginning with four issues a year, the journal expanded to six in 1984. In 1989, the role of Editor passed to Russell H Tuttle. In his inaugural editorial, Tuttle reiterated the purpose of the journal as a “major vehicle for sharing knowledge about all aspects of primate biology and the conservation of primates and their habitats” (Tuttle 1989, p 267). Tuttle reinforced the breadth of scope of the journal, listing fields as diverse as behaviour, ecology, systematics, comparative psychology, paleobiology, functional and comparative morphology, molecular biology, neuroscience, endocrinology, growth and development, and captive maintenance.

Pursuing the original aim of promoting the survival of primates in the wild, by increasing our knowledge and understanding of them, Tuttle also introduced the “Vivamus” (“we will live”) logo, by Elwyn L Simons and Stephen Nash, which highlights articles on endangered or threatened species (Tuttle 1989). Tuttle worked very hard to promote the international nature of the journal, broadening the geographical representation on the Editorial Board, encouraging submissions from habitat countries and ensuring constructive dialogue between author and reviewer (Tuttle 1998).

When Tuttle resigned in 2009, Joanna M Setchell was appointed Editor-in-Chief. She appointed four Associate Editors: Eduardo Fernandez-Duque, Jessica Rothman, Oliver Shülke and Charles Snowdon. Charles Snowdon retired at the end of 2011 and was replaced by James Higham.

With Setchell as Editor-in-Chief, the International Journal of Primatology maintains its original vision of a high quality journal that provides rigorous, constructive peer-review. The scope of the journal remains broad, although studies of primate conservation and behavior currently predominate (Setchell 2012). Articles from 2009-12 were dominated by Old (32% of articles published 2009-12) and New World monkeys (27%) and, to a lesser extent, apes (14%), with strepsirrhines very under-represented given the relative numbers of extant taxa (8%). Setchell is keen to broaden the scope of the journal to reflect the full diversity of disciplines contributing to fundamental primatology and all taxa (Setchell 2012).

Setchell continues Tuttle’s emphasis on international representation. A 2012 editorial showed that relative contributions from Latin America, Asia and Australasia, Africa and Europe were all increasing and that the international diversity of contributions has improved over time, reflecting the international nature of primatology (Setchell 2012). However, numbers of contributions from Latin America and Africa remain lower than those from Europe and the USA.

In addition to original research articles, Setchell encourages authors to submit authoritative reviews that inform the readership of the state of the field and commentaries that stimulate debate and encourage new research, provide a new interpretation of published data, correct prevalent misunderstandings, or speculate on the implications of relevant findings (Setchell 2012).

The Editorial Process

Manuscripts are submitted and handled on-line. The International Journal of Primatology provides detailed Instructions for Authors which include advice on structure and clarity. The Editor-in-Chief assesses each new manuscript and determines whether to send it for peer review. Manuscripts are rejected at this point if they are outside the scope of the journal. Those that are not sufficiently clear to assess the study design or findings are sent back to the authors for revision and resubmission. Peer review is handled either by the Editor-in-Chief or by an Associate Editor who selects and invites reviewers, assesses the manuscript and reviews, and requests and assesses revisions to the manuscript. Associate Editors make a final recommendation of accept or reject to the Editor-in-Chief, who takes all final decisions. Guest Editors of Special Issues act as Associate Editors for that Special Issue. The Editor-in-Chief's decisions to accept or reject a manuscript for publication are based on the manuscript's importance, originality and clarity, and the study's validity and its relevance to the remit of the journal.

Editorial Board

The Editorial Board serves to represent both the international nature of the journal and the broad range of expertise in primatology. Members of the Editorial Board are expected to act as ambassadors for the journal, promote and support the journal, seek out the best authors and encourage them to submit to the journal. They also review submissions on a more regular basis than other reviewers.

Peer Review

The purpose of peer review is two-fold: to advise the editor concerning the suitability of a manuscript for publication based on its contribution to the field, and to provide constructive comments to the author that will improve the quality of the manuscript. The International Journal of Primatology provides comprehensive Guidelines for Reviewers.

The editors use a wide range of sources to identify potential reviewers, including the editorial board, author suggestions, expert recommendations, personal knowledge and bibliographic databases to identify peer reviewers with appropriate expertise.

The International Journal of Primatology operates a review process in which the identities of the authors are known to the reviewers, but reviewers are not known to the authors, unless they choose to sign their review (i.e., single-blind review).

Ethics

The International Journal of Primatology requires an explicit ethics statement in submitted manuscripts that address the ethical considerations of the study, including any ethical

implications of the experimental design and procedures, and any licenses acquired to carry out the work.

The International Journal of Primatology follows the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines.

References

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